

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 11, 2004

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION FOR GRANT SUBMISSION TO THE VIRGINIA
TOBACCO SETTLEMENT FOUNDATION TO PROVIDE TOBACCO
PREVENTION PROGRAMMING IN PRESCHOOLS

ISSUE: City Council consideration of the Alexandria Community Services Board (CSB) application for grant funds from the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation (VTSF) to enhance existing tobacco prevention programming in Alexandria preschools through the CSB Preschool Prevention Team.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the grant application to VTSF, in the amount of \$75,000, to train 21 preschool teachers to implement the *Al's Pals* program, increasing services by 220 children per week; and to provide consultation to parents and teachers regarding child behavior problems; and
- (2) Authorize the addition of a full-time Therapist II (1.0 FTE) to the Preschool Prevention Team in the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse.

BACKGROUND: The VTSF was created in 1999 by the General Assembly to distribute monies from the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Fund for the purpose of restricting the use of tobacco products by minors. The grants will be awarded to local organizations and agencies to provide tobacco use prevention programs for youth. The proposal requires that all submissions utilize a science-based prevention program listed on the VTSF Compendium of Tobacco Use Programs for Youth. Funds up to \$75,000 will be awarded for FY 2005. *Al's Pals*, one of the VTSF Compendium programs, has recently been implemented in Alexandria in nine preschools, reaching more than 200 children weekly. *Al's Pals* is a nationally-recognized, resiliency-based early childhood prevention program, designed to reduce future substance abuse by developing personal, social and emotional skills in children.

DISCUSSION: This grant proposes adding a Therapist II (1.0 FTE), preferably bilingual, to help expand the capacity of *Al's Pals* by training preschool teachers to implement *Al's Pals*; to provide consultation to the teachers implementing *Al's Pals*; and to provide parent workshops and behavioral consultation.

It should be noted that the CSB, in an effort to maximize resources, also is applying for funds from the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS) Strengthening the Family Prevention Initiative (SFI) to enhance existing prevention programming in Alexandria preschools and homeless shelters through the CSB Preschool Prevention Team. In the event that both grants are awarded, the Board will be able to serve more of the City's over 3,700 at-risk preschool children in more locations in the City.

The services that would be provided through this grant are consistent with Council's recent work in setting major goals for the City, one of which is caring for youth and families. In addition, the Youth Policy, which City Council adopted in February 2000, emphasizes prevention and activities that are supportive of families.

FISCAL IMPACT: The grant proposal is for \$75,000 which is the maximum allowed through this grant application process. The required match for this proposal is 10% in-kind, which is identified in MH/MR/SA's operating budget using budgeted salary and fringe benefit costs for existing Preschool Prevention and program management staff. It should be noted that there are no monies in the City budget to continue these activities once the grant funds are expended. At the end of the grant period, the position will be eliminated.

ATTACHMENT: None. The grant application may be reviewed in Room 3600 (Office of Management and Budget), City Hall, after March 24, 2004.

STAFF:

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